

MEMORANDUM THRU DIRECTOR, SOLDIER AND FAMILY SUPPORT
FOR DEPUTY COMMANDER, USACFSC

SUBJECT: After Action Report On Department of Defense (DoD) Spouse Employment Summit, 22-26 Aug 00.

1. This after action report provides a summary of the activities and recommendations from the DoD Spouse Employment Summit.
2. The purpose of the Summit is for the Department and Service units to be more powerfully positioned (including clear tasks and responsibilities) to deliver assistance that will enhance the development of military spouse careers, military family income and retention of high quality military personnel.
3. The targeted products/outcomes of the summit were:
 - Increased knowledge and understanding of what is currently working in the field:
 - An analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges to the delivery of more effective spouse employment services
 - An action agenda for spouse employment services at the installation and major command level that includes tasks, suggested timeframes, responsibilities and resources at their respective levels
 - A Marketing Plan which targets employers, spouses, spouse employment program managers and chain of command
 - An action agenda for each individual participating in the Spouse Employment Summit

This was performed through two tracks of specialized workshops and facilitated work sessions. The workshop sessions included an analysis of family income and retention data, Spouse Preference, pilot program results, and resources offered through the Small Business Administration. The facilitated sessions helped participants analyze spouse employment assistance issues and translate the information into specific plans of action at all levels. In addition, the participants were asked to prepare for the summit by completing a questionnaire (Encl 1). In addition, the spouses were encouraged to describe their involvement in identified situations and to share their experiences and knowledge about what happens in these situations and the effects on family readiness/soldier retention.

Summit, 22-26 Aug 00

4. Over 100 individuals participated in the summit. Participants were from corporations, other Federal agencies, and program managers and spouses representing the four services. Spouses represented CONUS, OCONUS, large, medium and small installations, as well as all ranks of service. The Army was represented by 17 spouses and program managers (Encl 2).

5. The following synopsis provides preliminary information to be considered in developing an action agenda for spouse employment.

(a) Resources: The problem is a lack of dedicated resources in our system to address staffing, career development, and skills training:

- Vision: Adequate funding to support a Spouse Employment program that is resource rich and has state of the art technology.
- Recommendation: Obtain DOD/congressional resources to address staffing, career development, and skills training.

(b) Program Definition: The problem is the lack of a worldwide-standardized system of spouse employment services including a defined program, clear outcomes and accountability, and appropriate tools (i.e. data base, etc.)

- Vision: An uniformed method of providing standardized services across Service lines.
- Recommendation: Standardized training for counselors and staff (certification); standardized program guidelines and checklist for core services, standardized program name change, expand technology to provide services on-line and in-line

(c) Career Continuity: The problem is that we must accommodate spouses with a wide range of skills, attitudes, and experiences.

- Vision: One stop spouse employment service.
- Recommendation: Compile portable job opportunity information and post information on a central, World Wide Web site, home based business, telecommuting and global entrepreneurship.

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(d) Corporate Connection: The problem is that we do not think creatively about building partnerships to connect spouses to new and existing jobs.

- Vision: Partner with corporate America to increase jobs for military spouses.
- Recommendation: Employment opportunities i.e., Virtual jobs-Telecommute, database jobs, job pool, economic Incentives, recognition for Army spouse friendly businesses, addition of "Spouse to Work Liaison" on bases—new staff position, set asides for a certain percentage of jobs designated to go to spouses, internship/training partnerships with corporate America, establish a quasi governmental job agency for mil-spouses to allow corporations to bid for their services.

(e) Marketing: The problem is that we do not effectively market existing services to spouses or position ourselves well with leadership.

- Vision: Ensure that all spouse employment programs (across services) are a known, valued resource to spouses, commanders, and employees.
- Recommendation: Develop a strategic marketing plan for DoD spouse employment program: Global/multi-service, Grassroots/base specific.

6. The participants were also asked to list specific actions that could be accomplished in 60 days at the installation level and at the DoD Level (Encl 3). The DoD Spouse Employment Working Group will meet weekly to resolve the specific actions from this list as well to develop the action agenda that will take the spouse employment program into the 21st century.

7. Recommend that the BG Taguba, Ms. Linda Sims and LTC Robin Lynch be furnished a copy of this After Action Report.

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